

Message Text

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ORIGIN ITF-05

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O 172025Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 115900

FOL REPEAT BANGKOK 08996 SENT ACTION SECSTATE

INFO SECDEF CINCPAC MAY 17

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 8996

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, TH

SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN REFUGEES

REF: STATE 114308

1. ANY FURTHER DELAY IN MOVING CAMBODIAN REFUGEEES FROM THE CAMPS WHERE THEY ARE BEING PROCESSED FOR PAROLE INTO THE U.S. MAY BRING TROUBLESOME CONSEQUENCES FOR THEM, FOR US AND FOR THE THAIS. IN THE PAST WEEK, BOTH CAMPS -- ONE IN UTAPAO WITH ABOUT 400 AIR FORCE PERSONNEL AND ONE IN UDORN WITH ALMOST 500 MILITARY STUDENTS-- HAVE SPLIT INTO ANTAGONISTIC FACTIONS, THOSE FOR GOING TO THE U.S. AND THOSE FOR RETURNING TO CAMBODIA. THE LATTER GROUP IS RELIABLY REPORTED TO BE PLANNING TO STEAL U.S. TRUCKS, KIDNAP SENIOR OFFICERS FROM THE OPPOSING GROUP AND MAKE FOR THE CAMBODIAN BORDER. THE EMBASSY, THE U.S. MILITARY WHO RUN THE CAMPS AND THE THAI SUPREME COMMAND HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN A JOINT EFFORT TO KEEP THE SITUATION IN CONTROL. WE ARE URGENTLY TRYING TO FIND A PEACEFUL WAY OF RETURN-
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ING TO CAMBODIA THOSE WHO WISH TO GO BACK. REPRESENTATIVES FROM

THE CAMBODIANS AND FROM THE SUPREME COMMAND HAVE BEEN AT THE CAMBODIA BORDER FOR TWO DAYS, SEEKING CONTACT WITH CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES THERE. TENSION IN THE CAMPS, ESPECIALLY AT UDORN, HAS NOT ABATED.

2. THE 200 REFUGEES IN UDORN DESTINED FOR THE U.S. HAVE BEEN PROCESSED, INCLUDING MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND I-94 PAROLE FORMS. THE NAME LIST REQUESTED BY THE DEPT. IS SUBMITTED BY SEPTEL. WE ASK THAT THIS GROUP BE MOVED OUT OF THAILAND WITHOUT DELAY, BY WHATEVER TRANSPORT IS MOST READILY AVAILABLE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SECDEF AND CINCPAC ARE READY TO RESPOND TO A CALL FOR AIRCRAFT.

3. PROCESSING IN UTAPAO SHOULD BE COMPLETED EARLY NEXT WEEK. RAINS THERE ARE ADDING TO THE EXACERBATION AND UNREST IN THAT OPEN FIELD CAMP. WE WOULD LIKE TO BE ASSURED THAT THOSE REFUGEES THERE WHO WISH TO GO TO THE U.S. WILL BE MOVED EXPEDITIOUSLY.

4. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMBODIANS WE ARE CONCERNED WITH IN THIS TRANCHE IS UNDER 1,000, POSSIBLE 700 OR 800. IN CONSIDERATION OF INCIPIENT DISORDER IN THE CAMPS AND IN LIGHT OF OUR CURRENT EDGY RELATIONS WITH THE THAI GOVERNMENT, WE SHOULD ACT PROMPTLY TO MOVE THIS RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF REFUGEES OUT OF THAILAND BEFORE THEY BECOME A LARGER PROBLEM. THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF NOT DOING SO CAN BE MUCH GREATER THAN THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES POSED BY CROWDED CAMPS IN THE U.S.

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